

THE  
Earl of P—  
SPEECH  
TO THE  
House of Peers;  
When the Lords were accused of High-Treason.

*Copia Vera.* Mich. Oldsworth, 1647.

**My Lords,**  
**Y**OU know I seldom make Speeches; yet (my Lords) *Every thing would save live*; and now I must either find a Tongue, or lose my Head. I am accused for sitting here when your Lordships fled to the Army: Alas, my Lords, I am an Old Man, I must sit; you may ride or run any whither; but I am an Old Man. You Voted them Traitors who left the House, and went to York: they told us then, they were forced away by Tumults: Do not you say so too? Were they Traitors for going, and am I a Traitor for staying? Death, my Lords, what would you have me do? Hereafter I'll neither go nor stay. I have served you seven years, I have given you a good part of a Thanksgiving Dinner, for which you have paid me once a Month: I was fed like a Prince at the King's Court, twice every day, long before some of you were born; and this King continu'd, nay, out-did his Father in heaping Favours upon me, yet (for your likes) I Renounc'd my Master when he had most need of me, Voted against him, Swore against him, hired Men to fight against him; I confess I my self never struck at him, nor shot at him, but I pray'd for those that did: I gave my Tenants their Leases free, if they would rise and resist the King; and yet, my Lords, after all this must I be a Traitor? Have not I sworn for you over and over again? You sent me on your Errands to Oxford, to *Worcester*, to *Newcastle*, to *Holmesby*; you hurried me up and down as if I had been a King; you made me carry a world of Propositions; I brought them all safe and sound; what you bid me say, I spake to a fillable; and had the King ask'd me how old I was, without your Commission I should not have told him; and yet, my Lords, I am an Old Man. Remember how I stuck to you against *Stratford* and *Canterbury*; some of you shrunk at *Stratford's* Tryal, so that your Names were like to be posted for Malignants; and for *Canterbury*, many of you would have had him live: My Lord of *Northumberland* and others would have no hand in his Blood; but I gave you the casting Voice that sent him packing into another World, and yet now would you send me after him? Have I not sat with you early and late? When the Parliament rumbl'd and toils'd, and roll'd it self on this side, and on that side, still I was for the Parliament. Tho' I stay'd here with Presbyterian Lords, yet when you return'd I was firm to you. All the other Lords left you in the House, when Sir *Tho. Chapin* gave Thanks for your Return: but I stay'd and pray'd with you, and am (for ought I know) as great an Independent as any of you all. I Rejoyc'd with you, Fast'd, Sung

Psalms, Pray'd with you, and hereafter will run a way with you: Nay, I had done it now; but who knew your minds? If you meant I should follow you, why did you not wink upon me; think you I could run away by Instinct? My Lords, you know I love Dogs, and (tho' I say it) I thank God I have as good Dogs as any Man in England. Now, my Lords, if a Dog follow me when I do not call him, I bid him be gone; if I call him, and he comes not, then I beat him; but if I beat him for not coming, when I never call'd him, you'll think me mad. Death, my Lords, *this is a poor Dog is not worth the Whistling*.

But perhaps my Fault is not meer staying here, but being Active in your Absence; because in my Robes and *Wings* of *C. C.* I brought up Mr. *Palmer*, the Common new Speaker. Why, what if I did? Is not Mr. *Palmer* my own Cousin; would your Lordships have me uncivil to my Kindred? Why might not I entertain the new Speaker, as well as Sir *Robert Harley* entertain us to admit him? Mr. *Palmer* is none of Sir *Robert's* Cousin, and yet Sir *Robert* is an Old Man.

I hear, some say that I was forward to begin a new War; That my Hand is to all the Warrants for Lying Men and Horse, and in order thereunto I Voted His Majesty should come to London. 'Tis true, (my Lords) I did give my Vote for the King's coming hither; but wherefore was it? 'Twas only to choose a new Speaker. What would ye have us dumb, and sit here like Ferrets; my Lords, I love to hear Men speak; and all the Lawyers told me, *No King, no Speaker*; That either the Commons must name their Speaker, and the King approve him; or the King name him, and the Commons approve him. *No King, no Speaker*: And so I was for the King, that is, for the Speaker.

Then (my Lords) observe the manner of his coming: The King was to come according to the *Covenant*; mark ye that. I was still for my Oath: Let him come when he will, if the *Covenant* fetch him, he had as good stay away. And yet Men cry shame on the *Covenant*; Those that took it, cast it up again; and those that refuse it, have given a world of Arguments that it is unreasonable; which Reasons our Assembly (like a Company of Rascals) never yet answer'd. I know, my Lords, many of our Friends never took this Oath; but they refus'd it out of meer Conscience: Shall Malignants Conscience be as tender as ours? Why, what do they think our Consciences are made of? But, my Lord, suppose this Oath be unreasonable: Can we do nothing, but we must give Reason for't? This is as bad as the House of Commons.

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mons; who, when we deny to pass any Ordinance presently send to know our Reasons, tho' themselves give no Reasons, for demanding ours. And so Malignants would have *Reasonable Oaths*; only here's the difference; the House of Commons do use to demand Reasons, tho' I hold the *Government* is extreme; not able for some Malignants take to save their *Estate* so as to give it to make them lose their *Estate*; but love the *Estate* and both hate the *Government*. Thus, my Lords, we have Reason for this Oath, and your Lordships have no reason to make me a Traitor, while I give my Vote according to *Covenant*.

As for Signing Warrants to raise a new Army, I wonder you'll speak of it. Have not you all done it a hundred times? How many Reams of Paper have we subscribed to raise Forces for King and Parliament? 'Tis well known I can scarce write a word besides my Name: Can't a Man write his own Name, without losing his Head? If I must give Account for what I set my Hand to, *Lord have mercy upon me*. I see now my Grandfather was a wise Man; he could neither write nor read, and happy for me were I too. Come, come, my Lords, be plain, and tell me, Do I look like one that would raise a new War? I must confess I love a good Army, but if there be none till I raise it, *Soldiers of Fortune* may change these names. No, my Lords, 'twas not I, 'twas the *Eleven Members* would have raised a War. You see they were guilty, by their Running away. I neither ran with them, nor with you; I don't like this running away, I love to stay by it: And whither was for War, I that stay in Town, or you that went to an Army. The Devil a Horse did I lift, but in my new Coach, nor used any Harshness, but my Collar of SS; and will you for this clap me in the Tower? You sent me thither six Years since, but for handling a Standish, and now you'll commit me for writing my Name: What, my Lords, do you hate Learning? Can you not end nor begin a Parliament without sending me to the Tower? Do your Lordships mean to make me a Lord Mayor? If I needs must go, pray send me home to *St. Dunstons*, or *Durham House*. A damnable fine house, but not just that hour I may a your Lordships to drive Malignants out of London. But why to the Tower? Am I Company for Lyons? Do you think me a Catamountain, fit to be shewn thro' a Grate for two Pence? No, my Lords, keep the Tower for Malignants, they can endure it; some of them have been Prisoners seven Years; they can feed upon bare Allegiance, please themselves with *Discomfites* of Conscience, of Honour, of a Righteous Cause, and I know not what, but what's this to me? How will these Malignants look upon me, Nay, how shall I look upon them? I confess some of them love my Son's Company; they say he's more a Gentleman and has Wit: 's Death my Lords must I turn Gentleman? I thought I had been a Peer of the Realm; and am I now a Gentleman? Let my Son keep his Wit, his poor Father never got two Pence by his Wit. Alas, my Lords, what hurt can I do you? Or what good will it do you to have my Head? I am but a Ward; my Lord *Say* hath disposed of me this seven Years: I am no Lawyer, tho' the *Littleton* call me *Counsel*; I am no Scholar, tho' I have been their Chancellor;

I am no Statesman, tho' I was a Privy Counsellor. I know not what you mean by the *Three Estates*: Last year the Army demanded a Release for *Lilburn*, *Musgrave* and *Drum*. I thought they had been the three. I thank God I have a good Estate of my own, and I have the Estate of my Lord *Barnes*'s Children, and I have my Lord *Carnarvan*'s Estate; these are my *Three Estates*, and yet, my Lords, I to the Tower? Consider, we are but a few *Head* left; come, let's love and be kind to one another: The Cavaliers quarrell'd among themselves, beat one another, and lost all; let us be wiser, my Lords; for had we fallen in to their Condition, my Conscience tells me we had look'd most wofully.

I perceive, your Lordships begin better of me; and you would quit me, if I were not charg'd by the *Agitation* and *General Council* of the Army. How, *Agitation* death what that? Who ever heard that word before? I understand *Classical*, *Provincial*, *Congregational*, *National*; but for *Agitation*, it may (for ought I know) be a Knave not worth three Pence. If *Agitation* be a Noblement, you'll find the Devil has been an *Agitation*. As for the *General Council*, I hate the name of it, 'tis old and naught, and used to be full of *Bi-shops*: Those Fellows have trouble'd us ever since the *Apocryphal* time: I don't think we had made them poor enough, and is their Name come again to torment me? My Lords, I understand not these *General Councils*; those of old (they say) where *Christians*; and these are *Independents*: What a damnable deal of *Generalising* is here? *General Assembly*, *General of the Army*, *General Council of the Army*; we never had a quiet hour since we had so many *Generals*. Well, my Lords, these are hard Times, and we make them worse with hard Words, which neither we nor our Forefathers understood. Herefore *Bishops* went *June Divines*; then *Elders* would be *June Divines*; and now *Agitation* would be *June Divines*: (Dam me!) I think nothing, *June Divines*, but if I shall must Rule the Kingdom, why are not we our *Agitation*? Why may not I make *Oldswinford* my *June Divines*? His *Abilities* and *Honesty* are equal to *Wootton Bassett*? But for ought I see, *Agitation* will soon be *Earls of Pembroke* and *Montgomery*, than we *Agitation*. For the Parliament leads the People the Army, and *Cromwell* leads *Cromwell*; *Agitation* will lead *Agitation*; whether the Devil shall we all be led at last? I don't know.

My Lords, you see I have spoke my mind. I hope every Week some of your Lordships will do the like; and the Commons in this (tho' in nothing else) will follow the House of Peers. But I have done I have done, my Lord; remember, I beseech you, that I am an Old Man: I have been a Grandfather time out of mind, (for I was so when this Parliament began) and now must I be food for *Agitation*? O my Lords, I have used the King so ill, and he lov'd me so well; and I have serv'd you so well, and you use me so ill, that no Man is sorry for me. Therefore my Request is, That you would not think of sending me to the Tower, till some-body pities me.

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